

Borough of Watchung
Planning Board Special Meeting @7:30pm
March 16th, 2010
Minutes

Salute to the Flag.

Chairman Speeney called the meeting to order at 7:30 and stated that notice of this meeting had been posted in Borough Hall, filed with the Borough Clerk and given in the way of notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, and Star Ledger in conformance with the N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.

Present at the call of the roll were: Speeney[X] Boyd[X] Havas[X] Haveson[A] Addario[X] Pennett[X] Schaefer[X] Beck-Clemens[X] Panzarella[X] Ellis[A] Pote[A] Also present was Board Attorney Frank Linnus and Board Engineer Tom Herits.

Minutes

Chairman Speeney indicated that there was a quorum to conduct business and announced that Mr. Panzarella and Mrs. Beck-Clemens would be substituting for Mayor Ellis and Councilman Pote. The Chair sought a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of March 2nd, 2010 as published. Mr. Havas made that motion, seconded by Mrs. Schaefer. The Chair called for a voice vote. All were in favor who were eligible to vote.

Correspondence from Crystal Ridge asking to come before the board to address the gate/guard issue was brought up and possibly they will be on the agenda for April.

Chairman Speeney said that the Master Plan was developed in 1973. In 1979 there was a re-examination, another in '82, '84 and '89. In 1994 an update was done with significant revisions. More re-exams were done in '99, a partial re-exam in '03 on the quarry. A full re-exam was done in '05 and the next re-exam is due in '11.

Chairman Speeney explained that the Master Plan includes a statement of objectives, assumptions, policies and standards. Collectively, these are statements of goals and policies of the Borough both current and future growth. The Chair said that the Master Plan in itself is not a single document. Chairman Speeney said the Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan of 1994, for which we received substantive certification kept us from harms way relative to COAH. In 1997 there was an addendum to the Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan. There was the '99 re-examination of the Master Plan of development regulations, the open space element of the Master Plan from 2000. The '03 re-exam is the Weldon Quarry and the '05 re-exam. There is the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan dated 2005. Another Open Space and Recreation Plan adopted in '06.

Chairman Speeney said that the process for re-examination of the Master Plan would be ongoing. He said that the board would hire a planner and have public meetings, gathering information from the public, the council, as well as other organizations in town. The board will then filter out that information deciding what it does and does not want to include. The draft plan would ultimately be sent out to neighboring communities. Chairman Speeney said that he would like to finish this process by mid 2011. Tom Herits said that one important thing is for the Planning Board to review the Zoning Board's annual report. Mr. Herits said that from that report, you could see patterns in what people are coming before the board for. Chairman Speeney read an excerpt from the 2005 re-examination report. The essence was the importance of the Borough's long-standing residential land use patterns, density and character. Chairman Speeney said he felt strongly about that wording, and urged the board to carry that verbiage over in this re-examination.

Mr. Linnus said that on March 2nd the board was presented with a proposal on the Ritchie litigation. The Board authorized Mr. Linnus to communicate with Jack Arsenault. Mr. Linnus reported that the language has been worked out. Mr. Linnus said he has distributed a consent order under a cover letter dated March 15th approving the stipulation of settlement. It has been signed by both the attorney for the appellants, as well as the new owners of 40 Stirling Road. This settlement dismisses the litigation, keeping the Planning Board resolution in tact. CGRS, the new owners as well as their successors have abandoned the approval and will not be perfecting it.

Havas read: PB10-R6 Resolution of the Planning Board of the Borough of Watchung approving settlement of litigation. Hearing no discussion, the Chair asked for a roll call vote. The vote was as follows:

Speeney[yes] Boyd[yes] Havas[yes] Haveson[yes] Addario[yes] Pennett[yes]
Schaefer[yes] Beck-Clemens[yes] Panzarella[yes]

The motion carried.

The Chair opened up discussion from the public. Hearing none closed the public portion.

The Chair adjourned the meeting until the next meeting of April 20th, 2010.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Taylor
Planning Board Clerk